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SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS AND OES/IHB (DFANTOZZI/ CPATTERSON/CSHAPIRO)
STATE PASS TO USAID GH (GSTEELE, DCARROLL)
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP (STERN)
HHS/OSSI/DSI PASS TO FIC/NIH (RGLASS), OGH (JMONAHAN/ MABDOO/SCUMMINGS/DMILLER), ASPR (MPERDUE/RROBINSON)
CDC FOR COGH (SBLOUNT), CCID (SREDD) AND DIV-FLU(NCOX/AMOEN)
USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS (OSTA AND OCRA), FSIS
BANGKOK FOR USAID (MACARTHUR/AATHWIN), APHIS (HHOWARD/RTANAKA)
GENEVA FOR HHS (DHOHMAN)
ROME FOR FAO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [EAID](#) [EAGR](#) [PREL](#) [KFLU](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: (SBU) UNSIC advances planning for April 2010
Inter-Ministerial Conference for "Animal" and Pandemic Influenza

REF: STATE 82863

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED (SBU)

1. (SBU) Summary: Senior United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), and USG officials met with government of Vietnam (GVN) officials in Hanoi on November 25-27 in preparation for the 7th Inter-Ministerial Conference for Avian and Pandemic Influenza (IMCAPI) to be held in Hanoi on April 19-21. The highlights of a November 27 planning meeting were agreement on the dates for IMCAPI, inclusion of a technical phase, and setting overarching conference themes. Prime Minister Dung, the UN Secretary General, and 70-100 ministers are expected to attend, and the UN is pressing for minister-level attendance from all countries. The principle issue to resolve between now and the April conference is a process to develop and reach consensus on a possible joint statement.

2. (SBU) During a meeting with the DCM after the planning session, Dr. David Nabarro, UN Assistant Secretary-General, Coordination on Avian and Pandemic Influenza and the Global Food Crisis (UNSIC), said that to achieve success at the conference attendance by high-level, senior health, agricultural, and aid/finance officials was critical. He said USG leadership was similarly critical to the success of IMCAPI, stating that in addition to HHS Secretary and Undersecretary for Global Affairs (G), it would be extremely helpful to have the new USAID Administrator attend. Further, Nabarro was pleased that Minister Phat said he would ask Prime Minister Dung to instruct Vietnamese missions overseas to engage health and agriculture ministries, stressing that the importance of senior level political participation. He said joint GVN-USG-EU-UN demarches would be particularly effective. End summary.

3. (SBU) UNSIC's Dr. David Nabarro along with Dr. Alain Vandersmissen, Avian Influenza External Response Co-coordinator of the European Commission (EC), met with GVN officials and other stakeholders on November 26-27 to advance planning for 7th IMCAPI in Hanoi on April 19-21. The GVN, the USG and the EU are co-sponsoring the conference, with support from UN agencies. Growing emphasis on the animal-human nexus (i.e., animals and not just birds) in the evolution and spread of influenza prompted a change in the title of the meeting, substituting "Animal" for "Avian." In light of waning donor support and the challenges presented by the current pandemic on top of the unresolved endemic of highly pathogenic avian influenza in several countries, including Vietnam, it is hoped the conference participants will commit to a way forward.

4. (SBU) Prior to the multilateral meetings, Embassy's HHS/OS staff met with EC's Dr. Alain Vandersmissen on November 25 to review U.S. cooperative efforts to prevent and prepare for avian and severe

pandemic influenza in Vietnam. Vandersmissen noted the EU, which has pledged USD 200K for travel of delegations from developing countries outside of Africa, argued that the April 19-21 meeting should focus on "political issues" and avoid be side-tracked into "technical ones," especially from UN agencies. While the EC supports incorporating the broader theme of an animal-human interface, it does not support the "One World, One Health" labeling as proposed in some quarters, noting that it is too diffuse and

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already used by the Wildlife Conservation Society, based on an ecological set of principles, albeit related to an animal-human interface.

15. (SBU) Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) Minister Cao Duc Phat told UNSIC, EC, and a U.S. Embassy official during a separate meeting on November 26 that the GVN hoped the April conference would also produce a consensus on a broad outlines for global cooperation tied to concrete action to be carried out by countries and international agencies. The Minister, who is Vietnam's lead for its national inter-ministerial steering committee to address highly pathogenic avian influenza, expressed concern about waning donor support and highlighted the need to raise more financial resources.

16. (SBU) The UN's Nabarro replied that raising additional financial commitments before or during the April 19-21 conference was unlikely. Rather, he argued that Cambodia, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam needed to come to the conference with "a powerful set of ideas" to sustain and move beyond the current global H5N1 and H1N1 response to set a "political position around the future," which would be necessary for donor countries to respond. Part of the challenge, according to Nabarro, is to explain what is meant by the call for an increased emphasis on the "animal-human interface" in the context of a longer-term approach that will inspire the international community to respond. Nabarro suggested that Vietnam use its upcoming ASEAN chairmanship to promote minister-level attendance at the April 19-21 conference and nurture a strong political commitment among ASEAN countries. Minister Phat identified climate change as an important issue for Vietnam and suggested it might be linked to conference themes. Nabarro and Phat agreed that the conference must not become entangled with the contentious issues around sharing of human samples, which is being addressed on a separate track. Because of the importance of involving health and agriculture sectors in influenza control, the Dr. Nabarro also met with Minister of Health, Professor Nguyen Quoc Trieu, covering similar ground as with Minister Phat and stressed the global importance of the conference.

17. (U) As for the IMCAPI planning meeting itself, MARD's Vice Minister Bui Ba Bong chaired the third in-country working group meeting on IMCAPI preparations on November 27. The working group is based on Vietnam's Partnership for Avian and Human Influenza (PAHI) and brings together various ministries, international agencies, donor countries, and other stakeholders. The group provides recommendations to the GVN's organizing committee for IMCAPI; Post's input has been guided by reftel. Discussion at the meeting centered on the name of the conference, dates, venue, scope, inclusion of a technical phase for the conference, and processes related to issuing invitations, finalizing the agenda, and developing a possible joint statement. The chair listed commitments to date to support the conference: USD 500K from USAID, 200K from EU, and roughly 170K to date from the GVN. Lesser and in-kind support has been provided by the Hanoi offices of the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and UN Development Program.

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April 19-21 Meeting: Donor Support and Logistics

18. (SBU) The GVN expects 500 to 700 attendees, including Vietnam's Prime Minister, UN Secretary General, 70 to 100 ministers, heads of regional and international organizations, development banks, foundations, and research bodies. When ministers cannot attend, they should be replaced by the highest-level officials possible. According to GVN officials, day one of the conference will be more technical; days two-three will be more political and geared toward Ministers. Based on earlier conferences, the GVN expects up to 100 ministers of health, agriculture, and finance are expected, with participation by Vietnam's Prime Minister. The in-country IMCAPI planning group agreed that conference success will be judged by the strength of commitment to a way forward for

- a) eradication of H5N1/A highly pathogenic avian influenza,
- b) ensuring readiness to respond to future influenza pandemics, and,
- c) protection from emerging health threats of animal origin through efficient, sustainable, and integrated systems.

Participants in the planning meeting voiced various cautionary notes about the April 19-21 conference:

- planning must achieve the right balance between animal and human elements in the agenda, joint statement, and participation;
- discussion on 2009 H1N1 influenza A should be forward looking;
- Articulation of resource needs should assist with future mobilization;
- Discussions should not be dominated by debates on virus and benefits sharing; and
- the conference statement must look forward, and be firm and clear.

9. (SBU) Dr. Nabarro along with Dr. Julie Hall, World Health Organization expert on influenza and emerging infectious diseases, called on the DCM on November 27. Nabarro noted the USG has been the fundamental source of energy driving progress over the last years in combating H5N1 and currently 2009 H1N1. Vietnam was the optimal choice of nations to host IMCAPI given it is the global crucible of challenges and significant success. Nabarro reiterated that the April meeting should be political in nature. He requested Post's support in securing high-level USG attendance, offering that many countries based their level of attendance on the level of USG participation, specifically naming HHS Secretary and G, adding it would be extremely helpful to also have the new USAID Administrator attend.

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10. (SBU) Further, Nabarro noted that there is valid skepticism that the parties will develop a joint conference statement, given the historic failures to do so. Yet he was very optimistic but listed four potential risks for failure: the statement could be hijacked by the sample sharing controversy, some countries could try to make direct calls for increased donor support, occurrence of a new 2009 H1N1-related emergency or other emerging plague with pandemic potential, and a statement of insufficient weight in the eyes of Washington or Brussels.
Michalak